

passed H. Res. 1237, recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day. I voted in favor of this resolution and I commend my colleague, Representative DANNY DAVIS of Illinois for introducing this legislation. Juneteenth marks the anniversary of June 19, 1865, the day Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 Federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to take control of the State and formally free the slaves.

News of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War. When word finally reached the enslaved populations in these areas, African Americans celebrated their liberation in towns across Texas and the southwest. These celebrations became a tradition for African Americans in Texas and have since spread across the United States.

Juneteenth is not only a time to commemorate the historical significance of the emancipation of slaves, but also time to recognize and celebrate the vast achievements and progress of African Americans across the Nation. In my home State of Connecticut, Juneteenth is an officially recognized holiday. We make note of fearless Connecticut abolitionists James Mars and J.W.C. Pennington who fought tirelessly to end slavery and petitioned Connecticut's Legislature regarding voting and social rights for African Americans in the 1840s and 50s. We also recognize the significant milestone of the United States Supreme Court decision restoring freedom to the survivors of the *Amistad* Slave Ship, then living in Connecticut. Through museums and sites such as the Old State House, the Mark Twain House, the Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the Connecticut freedom trails, and the Amistad Center for Arts and Culture at the Old State House, we pay homage to the African American experience throughout the State.

And so Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate a day that represents not only an end to centuries of a great injustice, but the beginning of a new journey for all of Americans.

#### GREAT CARIBBEAN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN CULTURE

#### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 20, 2008*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Caribbean-American Heritage Month and the many contributions of persons of Caribbean descent into the American fabric.

Despite the lack of wealth and resources available to many in the Caribbean, the region continues to produce exceptional talent and is endowed with a capacity to overcome incredible odds. Our Nation has thrived as a country of immigrants, and we are more vibrant and hopeful because of the talent, faith, and resilience of Caribbean Americans. For centuries, Caribbean Americans have added to the strength of our country. They have been leaders, innovators, athletes, artists, entertainers, doctors, and lawyers.

The world has had the privilege of reading the words of internationally recognized Caribbean

writers and poets like Jamaica Kincaid, Derek Walcott (who won the 1992 Nobel Prize in Literature), and Edwidge Danticat (a finalist for the National Book Award). We have listened to the creative sounds of Kompa that has its origins in Haiti, Zouk from Guadeloupe, Soca from Trinidad and Tobago, and Reggae from Jamaica. Steel Pans, the only musical instrument invented in the 21st century originated from Trinidad and Tobago. Jamaica's First Lady of Theatre and Film, Leoni Forbes, won the Gemini Award for best actress in a comedy.

During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate the great contributions of Caribbean Americans to our Nation. We recognize that without them, our country would not be what it is today and we pay tribute to the common bonds that unite the United States and the Caribbean.

#### TRIBUTE TO PAT JOHNSON

#### HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 20, 2008*

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a community leader, Mrs. Patricia "Pat" Johnson, on her retirement after 27 years of service on the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees.

Pat's service to the Paso Robles public schools officially started when she was elected to the Paso Robles elementary school board, now the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees, but her contribution to the community of Paso Robles began long before that. With her daughter, Danielle, coming up through the Paso Robles school system, Pat served as both a classroom and library volunteer, often spending her entire day at Marie Bauer Elementary School and George H. Flamson Middle School. She served as president of the local Parent Teacher Association and the School Site Council prior to her election to the Board of Trustees.

During her time on the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees, the district experienced significant growth. Seven new schools and three administrative buildings were built during her tenure of service, a local middle school was modernized and property was purchased that would later make room for the teacher's center. Of the new schools built, she knew and worked with several of the teachers the buildings were named after.

In addition to playing a vital role in Paso Robles school district's growth, Pat also presided over several areas of conceptual transformation of the school district, including unification in 1996, of the Paso Robles elementary school board and the current board she serves on, as well as implementation the Middle School Concept, an independent study program, and accreditation of the district high schools and high school graduation diplomas. Throughout her tenure with the Paso Robles public schools, she was also an active participant in various California School Boards Association events.

Over the past 27 years, the students and community served by the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District have benefited from Pat's dedication and energetic service. She

worked tirelessly to ensure the students of Paso Robles had a school system that provided them a world-class education to ensure they were prepared for the future and successful throughout their lives.

Her many contributions to Paso Robles are a shining example of the dedicated public service to which we should each aspire. I know Pat looks forward to spending time happily in her retirement with her husband Fred, daughter Danielle, and grandchildren Nicolas, Isabella, and Jose. I commend Pat for her service to the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District and the local community, and I wish her all the best as she enters this next stage of her life.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF MR. KEVIN WILLIAMS

#### HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 20, 2008*

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Mr. Kevin Williams of Secaucus, New Jersey, for his extraordinary public service and congratulate him for being honored with the Congressional Award Gold Medal.

The Congressional Award is an esteemed recognition bestowed on exemplary young people who complete a minimum of 400 hours of voluntary public service, 200 hours of personal development activities, 200 hours of physical fitness, and four consecutive days and nights of an exploration or expedition. Kevin epitomizes everything that this award is seeking to extol; particularly his dedication to his community and commitment to public service.

At the young age of 18, Kevin Williams has already founded two nonprofit organizations, People to People International's Go International For Tomorrow Student Chapter and Wrap4ASmile Foundation, Inc. The first of these organizations, Go International For Tomorrow, focuses on developing youth leadership through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities. The second, Wrap4ASmile, raises funds, collects products, packs care packages, and distributes personal care items that cannot be purchased with food stamps. These two groups successfully encourage young adults to get involved in various public service activities.

Kevin has spent over one thousand hours performing valuable community service, both in my home State of New Jersey and abroad. He has earned numerous awards documenting and celebrating his achievements. Most recently, Kevin received the 2008 Comcast Leaders and Achievers Award, the People to People International Golden Award, and, for the past 4 years, the Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Award.

Kevin is a truly exceptional young leader in our community. In addition to founding two nonprofits, Kevin has participated in the International Student Leadership Conference of Operation Smile, the American Legion New Jersey Boys State Conference, and the National Youth Leadership Council Conference in Healthcare Medicine. He is an ambassador of public service, and his efforts help make the world a better place for all of us.

Today, I would like to congratulate Mr. Kevin Williams for receiving the Congressional